

131 THE K  
CHURCH of England's  
COMPLAINT

Against the

Irregularities

Of some of its

CLERGY.

By a Presbyter of the Church of England.

*Aude aliquid brevibus Gyaris & carcere dignum,  
Si vis esse aliquis: Probitas laudatur & alget.* Juv.

Preach the Word, be instant in season, out of season;  
Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all Long-suffering, and  
Doctrine; for the time will come, when they will not  
endure sound Doctrine. — 2 Tim. Ch. 4. 2, 3.

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( 2 )

## The Church of England's Complaint, &c.

May it please your Grace,

**W**HEN I reflect on (and consider) the Vast and almost Infinite Distance betwixt your Grace and me; I am almost afraid that my presuming to address your Grace, will meet with hard Censures from a Churlish and an Ill-natur'd Age: But, my Lord, an Ant may see that which escapes the Eagle's View: For 'tis not only possible and probable, but 'tis also most certain, that the Inferiour Clergy are more sensible of some Irregularities in some of their Brethren, than your Grace can be: For your Grace is so taken up with the Great Affairs both of Church and State, that 'tis not possible that small Matters should find Admittance.

*Non vocat exiguis rebus adesse Jovi.*

I don't doubt in the least, my Lord, but that 'tis the Duty of every Churchman to put his helping hand towards the Reforming some Abuses crept into the best of Churches, (as all the Foreign Reform'd do think our Mother to be: ) But, without Offence, I hope, to my Superiours, I may have leave to make some just Reflection on True and Real Irregularities, committed by some of my Brethren. The Welfare of our Church I shall only regard, and the Persons of the Offenders I shall be tender of: But their Irregularities I shall not pass by without a just Censure. 'Twill be a great piece of service to our Church, if I set things right; and if those Irregularities be remov'd, a mighty Stumbling-block will be taken away, and our Dissenting Brethren will be mightily pleas'd, and in pleasing them I shall obtain your Grace's Favour: And who knows, but when they are in the Humour, they may become hearty and sincere Members of our Church, the Glory of the World. God send—I have the Prayers and good Wishes of all the Orthodox Clergy, that God would be pleas'd to bless my honest and well-meaning Understanding, and by it am in hopes that I shall merit your Grace's Favour: For would it not be a Heaven upon Earth, to have our Clergy without Spot or Wrinkle, and to be in such a State, that the worst, and most bitter of our Enemies should not have any just Grounds or Occasions to object against us. I do not pretend (for I cannot) to alledge any thing against the Morals of that Body; for the World is convinc'd, that they are a Sober and most the Learned Clergy in the Catholick Church. A Foreigner long ago, did stile our Clergy, *Sapienter Mundi*, and it is as true still; and your Grace, and many others, are flaming, and eminent Instances of it.

The following Remarks strike at *Irregularities* of several sorts: As,  
1. Such as swerve from the strict Observation of the Rubrick of our Church.  
2<sup>dly</sup>, Such as violate the Canons of it.  
3<sup>dly</sup>, I shall make my Remarks on some mixt Cases, yet *Irregularities*; All which in their Order.

The First sort of *Irregularities* are such as swerve from the strict Observation of the Rubrick of our Church.

'Tis agreed amongst the Clergy, that the Funeral Office ought to be us'd only in Consecrated Ground, and the \* Rubrick supposes it. And upon this depends a famous Story of the Wife of one of your Grace's Order; who was buried, say some, in *Bunhill-Fields*, among the Ranters, Fifth-Monarchy-Men, Presbyterians, Antipædobaptists, Independants, and French Prophets; A Blessed

\* See the Rubrick before the Burial Office.



sted Crew, to rise with at the Resurrection of the Just : Others say, that  
 s Lady was buried at *Bethlehem*-Ground ; the Place makes no great dif-  
 fence ; only, say some, but I know not upon what Proof, that the latter  
 ound was consecrated : Indeed, if this was true, I confess, it takes off a  
 at deal of the Scandal.

To this Honourable Funeral were invited Clergymen of great Figure ;  
 ongst which were the learned M——, the Silver-tongu'd H——, with  
 C——, and others, that held up the Pall ; and the Person officiating,  
 Mr. B——, who, I believe, upon second Thoughts, would have acted  
 erwise.

Now, Gentlemen, and Brethren, if this Funeral Pomp was solemnized at  
 former Place, what a great Scandal have you brought on the Gown !  
 w can you answer it to God and the Church, to grace the *Camiterium* of  
 imaticks and worse, with your Presence upon such a solemn Occasion ?  
 d you, Mr. B——, if the Story be true, as I hope in God it is not, how  
 you answer your Behaviour to God, the Church, and my Lord the Bi-  
 p. I shall not censure you, but shall leave that to your Reverend Diocesan.  
 ut, say others, This mighty Noise is about Nothing, for that the Eu-  
 at was at *Bethlehem* Ground ; and the Case is alter'd ; for that Ground  
 solemnly consecrated by a Bishop. I am glad to hear it with all my  
 art : and to save their Credits, I wish it were true. But the Difficulty  
 the Proof. But, Gentlemen, were it true 'twas more than you knew,  
 n you undertook that Business, and so 'twas only by mere Chance, you  
 e in the right. And to mollifie every thing, 'tis said, that it was the de-  
 of the Deceased to lie by her first Husband, be the Place where it will ;  
 'tis a barbarous thing not to fulfil the Will of the Dead. In such a case,  
 a submission, I think otherwise ; for Honour and my Lord's Character,  
 ld be more than enough to appoint a Place of Burial. This Case ought  
 e left to his Lordship's Discretion ; and, if I may presume to offer my  
 oughs, a Cathedral, or Church would have been more Honourable for  
 Lady's Interment. But what shall I say ? It may be, his Lordship had  
 Relations already in that Place, which procur'd more easily his Lord-  
 s Concurrence. But, your Grace, that descended from the sequestred,  
 Orthodox Divines of our Church, I am sure, will think otherwise ;  
 so I shall take leave of this Point, and submit it to your Grace's Judg-  
 t and Censures.

As, methinks I see a By-stander, thus addressing himself to your Grace ; My  
 Church, there have been loud Clamours, much Noise, and some Reflexions  
 arities ; several Persons of Learning and Piety, concerning their Presence at  
 bserva-tain Funeral. Be it so, that the Place of Burial was not consecrated  
 be us'd Bishop : What then ? Is it reasonable, that some shall be censur'd, and  
 supposes s go scot-free for the self-same Act ? I think, in such a case All ought  
 Wife of censur'd, or else acquitted. But, to come to the point : What was  
 me, in but once at *Bunhill*, or *Bethlehem*, is weekly, and sometimes oftner,  
 y-Men, at *Topley*-Ground, and yet no Din and Noise is raised against that Re-  
 ts ; A doct Doctor ; 'tis rather by some chosen, because not consecrated.  
 Blessed he——  
 hat the Gentleman has alledged, is Fact, and its Truth is as clear  
 e Meridian Sun : My Lord of *London* knows it, and I am told,  
 often proffer'd to consecrate it upon an Endowment, tho' small. His  
 ship is clear, and the Matter sticks somewhere else. And, to take  
 away

away all scandal for the time to come, I could wish, that your Grace would send out your Injunctions to that Doctor to stop all Funerals in that Ground and Baptisms in that Chappel, till both are consecrated.

2dly, There are some Clergymen, that, have, as St. Peter says, *forsook the right way, and have gone astray, following the way of Balaam the Son of Beor, who loved the ways of unrighteousness.* In plain English, my Lord, I mean some Clergy, when they visit the Sick, have the Hardiness (to call it so worle) to take Money for it; and this I take for a scandalous Irregularity and on which I next intend to Remark. I have too much reason, my Lord, not to doubt of the Frequency of this very ill Practice, among some of the Clergy in and about London. I am told, that 'tis arriv'd to such a Height and Esteem, that 'tis stiled a *Pretty Perquisite.* O Tempora! O Mores! Men of Figure some, and D. D. Divines, and other of inferiour Degrees make too too much practice of it. No Man has a more fervent Desire to maintain the Dignity of the Sacerdotal Office, than my self: and were it possible to stifle this sordid Practice, none would be more willing: But the Contagion is spread, and there is a grand Necessity of applying a Remedy and curing its Malignity; and to whom shall I apply, but to your Grace, to discourage this foul and enormous Practice. The Honour of the Clergy lies at stake; and to suffer such vile Doings to go on unpunisht, will sink their Credit to such a Degree, that we shall become the Off-scouring and Ridicule of the Deists and Atheists. To visit the Sick, is the most charitable Office in the World, & has been so accounted in all Ages of the Christian Church. And with shall we do nothing but the prospect of sordid Gain? 'Tis recorded of our Blessed Lord, that he went about doing good: But we do not read that he received Bribes for his extended Charity to the souls of Men. And dare we, who are his Ministers, presume to do otherwise? Dare we, who are appointed to attend dying Souls lying on the Beds of Languishing, expect Gains of Ungodliness? Good God! How are some of us fallen from the practice of the Golden Ages of the Church! We blame, and that justly, the practice of the Priests of the Church of Rome, in strowling about, and selling Indulgences to the Cheating the Souls of poor deluded Christians; and this Villainous practice was the first Motive of Martin Luther's Reformation from that Corrupted Church; & how near do those of our Church, who make a gain of their visiting the Sick, come to them, I need not tell your Grace. But it may be said that 'tis a scandal thrown upon us by our Enemies, whose delight is to tarnish the Reputation of our Clergy. Would to God, that was the Case; But this I can assure your Grace, that there is too much truth in the Allegation; and within the little Circle of my own Knowledge, I can, (and am sorry to say it) prove it, even to a Demonstration; for to instance in some particulars; there was a poor Woman that desired a Reverend Doctor to visit her own Husband; and after his Exhortations and Puritanical Prayers, she was willing to gratify him; she had but two Shillings and Sixpence in the whole World, and the Doctor had the Conscience (as I call it) to leave her only the poor Size. The self-same Person (of whom I could multiply Instances, for I believe, 'tis his constant Practice) visited another Person (whom I well know) and who indeed was in good Circumstances) and from her took ten Shillings, and three for the Coach, though within one Mile from his own House. I do not know, but that this villainous Way of Proceeding has been the main Occasion of many Souls going prepared to the other World; for in my Walks I have seen too much of it many times, and almost innumerable, I have my self been tempted to acc-



money; but I thank God (who enabled me with Courage) that I always re-  
s'd it. I should be glad to know the Reason of such a general Inclination  
all sorts of People to proffer a Gratuity upon such solemn Occasions, if  
too many Persons were not as ready to receive it. The Church requires  
and good Men pray for) the Reformation of Manners of these Men; and  
lies at your Grace's Door to remove this Stumbling-Block.

Were I to search for the Original of this foul Practice, I believe I should  
find it amongst the Dissenting Teachers; and if it be so, is it not a burning  
name for some of our Clergy to tread in their steps? I hope I have said  
enough (some Men may think too much) to move your Grace to Censure  
such Irregular Members that are guilty of this foul Practice, that tends to  
the dishonour of God, the discredit of the Church, and the hazard of their  
own immortal Souls.

Another great Irregularity amongst some of the Clergy, is the manner of  
Administration of \* Private Baptism; the Church has ordered  
a Form for it; and I would ask the Question, How often is  
that Form us'd with Charge to the Parents, as it directs, to  
bring the Infant to Church to be received into the Congregation? But in-  
stead of that, the Publick Form is generally used; How Inconsistent? How  
incongruous? How Unaccountable is this way? In times of Yore 'twas  
otherwise, and it lies in your Grace's Power to bring it to its pristine Use.  
Besides, as 'tis now practis'd, it makes meer Laquies of the Clergy, and they  
are oblig'd to dance after every one's Pipe for filthy Lucre's sake, as the Apo-  
stle tiles it. This renders the Clergy vile and sordid in the Eyes of the  
Laity, and sinks the Sacerdotal Office to the lowest degree. In a little  
time a set Discourse about House-Baptism may see the Light: upon which  
account it will be needless to trouble your Grace any farther with it.

The Solemnization of \* Marriages in some Places is very Irregular, and  
your Grace ought to be acquainted with it, being highly Scan-  
dalous in several Respects; I mean, some Clergymen daring to  
Marry without Banns or License. The Rubrick directs, That  
upon Festivals, they shall, where the Parties dwell, be publick-  
ly ask'd in the publick Congregation. But this good old way is notoriously  
abused and perverted by some, whose Names I could bring to Light, but I  
pare them. There are several thousands Married (and many of them un-  
done) in the Fleet-Prison, Lamb's-Chappel and other Places, and yet the  
Offenders go unpunished; and this, with submission to your Grace, is a burn-  
ing Shame, and a Practice intolerable. I have often thought it highly Rea-  
sonable to lay it before the High-Court of Parliament; but since the Offen-  
ders are Ecclesiasticks, it more reasonably falls under your Grace's Cognisance;  
I shall not presume to offer Reasons to stop this foul Practice, but shall leave  
it to your Grace, whole high Station in the Church, and whose vast know-  
ledge, can easily find Ways and Means to put a stop to this abominable  
Practice, which very probably has been the Ruine of the Sons and Daughters  
of the Nobility and Gentry of this Kingdom. It has been a wonder to me,  
that their Complaints have not reached your Grace's Ears, and it is high  
time to apply a Remedy, and God grant the time was come that *there be*  
*no mere complaining in our Streets.* it is supposed by the Rubrick, that all  
Persons should be present at the publick Service, to offer up their Petitions  
to the Almighty; But a vile Practice has for some Years obtained that some  
of the Clergy spend their time (whilst the Congregation is imployed in the  
Sacrifices of Prayers and Praises) I know not how, in the Vetties. This

ought not to be done, it carries with it a loud Scandal, and puts a Stumbling Block in the way of the People. I cannot imagine what such Clergymen can say in their own Defence, and how they can maintain this fordid Practice, if their way is not defensible, and ought to be Censured. I was once told of a Conference betwixt a Layman and a Doctor of Figure and Consummate Learning, on this Point. *Sir*, says the Layman, What thoughts have you of our solemn way of Worship of our Church? To which the Doctor reply'd, That he thought it was the most Rational Piece of Service that was ever used in the Christian Church. Pardon me, *sir*, I think, says the Layman, that your thoughts are otherwise; why so, says the Doctor? because replied he, you act otherwise; for why should I mind your Words when your Deeds run Counter to them. Your meaning, quoth the Doctor. Well, *sir*, replied the Layman, it cannot be, that your Sentiments are real, when you spend the time (that should be employed in the Congregation of the Saints) in the Vestry. At which the Doctor was Non-plussed, and so the Conference ended.

And now I cannot forbear to let your Grace know an odd Circumstance of a Lazy Clergyman, and how he spent his time in the Vestry during Divine Service, I was an Eye-Witness to the Matter of Fact; this Reverend Person I found stretched out at length on Chairs without Wigg, and Head tied up in Linnen, conning his F——'s Notes. This very odd sight strangely amazed me; and had I not been a Spectator, its Narration would have been incredible. At first I took it for a Corps laid out, in order for Interment; but Motion soon rectified my Sentiments. Your Grace's Order will alter this Irregularity, which would tend to the Glory of God, and real Satisfaction of all true Christians. And I lately understand that the Industrious and Learned Mr. Bennet in one of his Tracts, has lashed this Irregularity, though I have not seen it; I do not doubt, but that he has done it to the purpose, and I hope to full purpose, as it will be superfluous in me to add more Words.

The next Irregularity I shall mention, is the time and season of publick Prayers of the Church. In some Churches of the County, the Form of Prayer is only used on the Lords-Day, and in others only on *Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday*. This was not the prime Intention of the Church, as is apparent from the Rubrick and Calendar. First for the Rubrick, 'And the Curate that Minist'reth in every Parish-Church, or Chapel, being at Home, or not being otherwise reasonably hindered, shall say the same in the Parish-Church or Chapel, where he Minist'reth, and cause a Bell to be Tolled thereunto at convenient time before he begin, that the People may come to hear God's Word, and to pray with him.'

But this \* Rubrick, and others, must be accounted amongst the Cobwebs of Dr. Pain, or the Lumber of Dr. Isham; which odious Comparisons may be found in the Answer to Mr. Long's *Vox Cleri*, and in the *Vision of a Sermon* of the latter, printed not long since by *Walter Kettilby*. What the first Doctor did, in comparing Queen *Elizabeth* to a nasty Slut, that left Cobwebs in every Corner, was not strange, if you compare that with his other Actions; but the other amazed me, considering whose Chaplain he had been of a long standing, and considering what Reputation he had amongst the Learned and Orthodox Clergy; but the Doctor grew old and forgot himself; and this, my Lord, shews the Truth of that saying, *Humanum est errare*; and I must have the Charity for that excellent Person, as to say, that this was the only Blemish of his Writings; but they are both gone to their place, and it is not Human to insult the Ashes of the Dead, always bearing in mind that of Loyal Cowley, viz.

\* See the Rubrick concerning the Service of the Church.



*'Tis wicked, with insulting Feet to tread  
Upon the Monuments of the Dead.*

But Secondly, as to the Calender, which has provided Lessons for all Days in the Year. Now I would fain know what was the Intention of our Holy Mother Church, in appointing a Calendar, if the Clergy were not daily to officiate. The case is so plain, that I shall not expatiate, but shall leave it to my Brethren to reflect on.

The Non-Administration of the Lord's Supper, is another Irregularity, and shall next be spoken to. The Rubrick not only supposes, but is also express, that when the Communion-Service is appointed to be used, that Service ought to conclude with the Administration of the Lord's Supper. One Rubrick runs thus: *So many as intend to be Partakers of the Holy Communion,* and See the Office. Another begins thus: *The Table at the Communion-time, having a fair Lin-cloth upon it.*—I would fain know, why are these Directions, if the Sacrament is not to be administered at the same time? Now the Church has appointed this solemn Service to be used on all *Sundays* and *Holidays*; and therefore all those Days the Lord's Supper is to be administered: Yet some are so unaccountably Irregular, tho' the Sacrament is not always on those Days administered, yet, I know not how it comes to pass, the *Prayer for the Church Militant*, with others, and the Blessing in some Churches, is wholly omitted, and the Minister concludes in the Pulpit. This odd Practice (my Lord) I cannot account for. In the proper Prefaces for the Communion-Service, those Collects after *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Ascension-day*, are to be used seven days it; I do not remember, and upon *Whitsunday*, six. The Church suppos'd the Sacrament on all those Days to be given, or why else are the Collects order'd to be read? These were the *Octaves* of the *Ancient Church*; and so many Days, as *Holidays*, were set apart for the Greater Solemnization of those Festivals, and the same Communion-Office was read on all those Days; and not only so, but I believe will appear from another Rubrick, that our Church commanded a daily Communion, or else, I confess, I do not understand it. It runs thus, as your Grace may see in the Order, how the rest of the H. Scripture is appointed to be read. 'Note also, that the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, appointed for the *Sunday*, shall serve all the Week after, where 'tis not in this Book otherwise order'd. Now what can be said to this Rubrick, if the Collect, Epistle and Gospel be enjoyn'd to be read every day, then must the Communion-Service likewise read: If so, than the Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of the

is to be daily given, *quod erat demonstrandum*. I am afraid by some this Rubrick is to be thrown away with the Cobwebs and Lumber of the two Re-  
vifitation and Doctors. But there is no manner of Doubt, but that your Grace thinks otherwise; and so with your Grace's leave, I'll pass to some other Matter.

And the next Irregularity I shall speak to, relates to the Non-Observation of Vigils, Feasts and Fasts which our Church has commanded. There are several Reasons assign'd by Learned Men for the Institution of Vigils, which comes from the Latin *Vigila*, Watchings; but none comes nearer the Truth, than those who impute the Rise of these Night-Watches, to the necessity Christians were under of meeting in the Night, and before Day, for the Exercise of their Devotions in common, by reason of the Malice and Persecution of their Enemies, who endeavour'd their Destruction, when they discover'd them to be Christians. God be thank'd there is not yet the same reason for those of the Church to observe the Vigils: But God only knows, how soon (for our Sins) it may be our case: For it is sad to consider, and a melancholick Theme to insist on when we see the Church and Priesthood insulted with Deists, Socinians,

and all sorts of Dissenters, and no check put to it by the Higher Powers. But 'tis stranger to consider the Boldness of our Enemies, when the Person upon whom the Throne is a strict Observer of the Doctrine of our Church.

But, 'tis to be hop'd the Reign of our rampant Enemies is but short. God send——

But another Reason which still holds good, for the Observation of Vigils, is this; \* *It was the Custom of the Primitive Christians to pass great part of the Night that precedeth certain Holidays, in Devotion and Religious Exercises: and this even in those Places which they set apart for the publick Worship of God. But when these Night-Meetings came to be so far abused, that no Cure could prevent several Disorders and Irregularities, the Church thought fit to abolish them, and these Night-Watchings were converted into Fasts, still keeping the former Name of Vigils.* Our Church still commands the Observation of them, as is apparent from the Table of Vigils, before the Nativty of our Lord, and several other Festivals. And the Rubrick after the Nicene Creed enjoins the Curate to declare what Fasting Days in the Week following are to be observ'd. And what the Days of Fasting or Abstinence are, may be learnt from the Rubrick; as the 40 Days of Lent, &c. See the Rubrick. The next is Festivals, or Days kept in Commemoration of our

Saviour and his Apostles; and we are informed by the abovesaid pious and Religious Person (whose admirable Book, I think, ought to be in all Hands, as I dare say, 'tis in your Grace's) how they ought to be imploy'd: But first, we ought to know, how the Primitive Christians observ'd these Days of Joyfulness, which was thus: \* *They were wont once a*

*Year to meet at the Graves of the Martyrs, there solemnly to recite their Sufferings and Triumphs, to praise their Vertues, to bless God for their pious Examples, for their holy Lives, and happy Deaths.* Besides,

they celebrated these Days with great Expressions of Love and Charity to the Poor, and mutual Rejoycings with one another.—— The next Enquiry is, how these Days ought now to be observ'd. We should (says the abovesaid Great Person) constantly attend the Publick Worship, and partake of the Bless'd Sacrament, if it be administered. In private, we should enlarge our Devotions, and suffer the Affairs of the World to interrupt us as little as may be.—— If we do but commemorate any Mystery of our Redemption, or Article of our Faith, we ought to confirm our Belief of it, by considering all those Reasons upon which it is built, that we may be able to give a good account of the Hope that is in us. We should from our Hearts offer to God the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and resolve to perform all those Duties, which result from the Belief of such an Article. If we commemorate any Saint, we should consider the Vertues for which he was eminent, and by what Steps he arriv'd at so great Perfection; and then examine our selves how far we are defective in our Duty, and earnestly beg God's Pardon for our past Failings, and his Grace to enable us to conform our Lives for the time to come, to those admirable Examples that are set before us. Thus far that excellent Author.

That Festivals ought to be kept in our Church, is plain from the Table of Feasts: And that the Clergy ought to give such Notice to the People on the Lord's Day, is as plain from the Rubrick after the Nicene Creed. Now it would be richly worth your Grace's while to order an *Inquirenaum* thro' your Province in this, as well as in other Matters: But I dare not presume to dictate.——

The next Irregularity I shall mention, is this: Some of our Brethren have got a lazy way of repeating other Mens Sermons. Now, I think, this is against the Rubrick; for that after the Nicene Creed it thus directs; *Then shall follow the Sermon, or one of the Homilies*——

\* Nalson's  
Compan. of  
Festivals, &  
Fasts, p. 564.

\* See Nalson,  
p. 1.

See the Table.

See the Rubrick.

See the Rubrick.



rs. But 'tis supposed, that if a Person (as 'twas the case of many at the Dawning  
 on upon the Reformation) be so ignorant, as not able to compose a Sermon, then  
 the Church orders him to read one of the Homilies. But if he be of Ability,  
 God en to use one of his own composing. But the case is alter'd; for I've often  
 ation of heard (and blushing for them I speak it) other Mens Works eccho'd from the  
 s to passipit; and I do not in the least doubt, but that others have so too. I could  
 Devotion me the Persons, but shall not at present; I do not know what I shall do  
 they se greater. What a shame it is to hear the Works of the Profound Barrow,  
 Meetings Great Tillotson, and many others of Fame, odly managed, and uncouthly  
 Disorderd taken from the Pulpit. I think, with submission, this ought to be rectify'd.  
 Watch say, more than that, there's a greater Insolence behind. I could name to  
 Church our Grace those Men who had the Forehead, not only to deliver other Mens  
 e of Viork, but also to print them, tho' printed before. What shall I call this?  
 And the ne of this sort of Men was Camp Chaplain to Gracious K. William of not-  
 ang Day the forgotten Memory by your Grace.

The next Remark shall be upon the Irregularity of the Burial of the Dead.  
 The Rubrick runs in these Words: *The Office ensuing is not to*  
*be used for any that dye un-baptized, or excommunicate, or have* See the Rubrick.  
*been violent Hands upon themselves.* I have reason to think, that some of the  
 by the d Clergy do often violate the two last Clauses. To begin with the last, concern-  
 k, ought g Suicide: If a Person (as I could instance in many) of a great Estate, makes  
 nt to be ay with himself. his Relations shall have the Credit of the Attendance of  
 tians ob- the Clergy, and the Office (Oh shame to speak it) of Burial shall be read.  
 nt once d his, my Lord, ought not to be done; for where's the Hope that a Self-Mur-  
 to recite derer sleeps in Jesus; and that Office is only to be used for such that dye in  
 s God for e Lord. As for Excommunicates, 'tis plain and express, that they are ex-  
 Brides, ded, and have no manner of right to that Solemn Office; yet how often is  
 the Poor d for all Sorts of Schismatics. The Ancient, nay, our Church, in one  
 ow these the Canons, censures them as *ipso facto* Excommunicates. And, my Lord,  
 t Person a Jest to say, they are not Schismatics, because the Civil Government  
 , if it be exempted them from certain Penalties, laid on them by several Acts of Par-  
 he Affairs lament, which are only *pro tempore* suspended. Now I think, with submission  
 orate any my Superiours, If they were Schismatics (as no doubt they were) before  
 our Belief the Act of Toleration, they continue still so, and so by consequence, as Ex-  
 be able communicates, they have no shadow of Right to have that Office used at their  
 arts offer neral; and your Clergy hope that your Grace will redress that intolerable  
 ies, which grievance: for how can we use these Expressions concerning Schismatics  
 we should no dye in their Schism) *In fure and certain op* — as our hope is, this our  
 io'd at f other doth. This is a hardship upon the Clergy, and I cannot account for it.  
 our Duty e must not mangle the Service, and if we use the whole, it is to the highest  
 able us to degree absurd and unaccountable. What must we do in this Extremity? Your  
 at are se Grace, only with the Assistance of an *Honest Convocation*, can relieve us. Would  
 Table of God that time was come. I dare say, that those Pious Compilers of our  
 se to the mon-Prayer (who sealed it with their dearest Blood, thought as I do, viz.  
 after the t Schismatics had not right to that Office. For the Sin of Schism is of that  
 r Grace nous Hue, that some of the Ancient Fathers thought, that Atonement for  
 this, a ould not be attained, tho' by Martyrdom it self. And I apt to think, that  
 Pious Reformers had some such Thoughts of it. For Schism, as the Words  
 hren have port, is Division, or a cutting off from the Catholick Church: And if so,  
 Now, if it be the case of Hood-winkt Dissenters, I am sure, they have no right  
 he Nicene that Office.

I shall only mention one more Irregularity, or a breaking in upon the Ru-  
 brick

brick by some of the Clergy, and that is Churching at Home. The Rubric directs the Woman, at the usual time after her Delivery to come into the Church — Then the Priest shall say to her

but the present practice in some places is quite reverse. It must be done in the Chamber, or not at all. Now could we persuade those Persons to bring their tender Children to the Church to be enroll'd Members of the Catholic Church; I hope their tender Mothers would oblige the Congregation with their Company; for what place so proper, as the Altar, to return God thanks for those wonderful Mercies they lately received. And yet no Arguments will prevail; in defence of this Practice, many Pretences, (and they are nothing but Pretences) are used; as catching of Cold, Modesty, and what not. But the true reason is at the bottom; and that is, Pride. The Clergy must dance after them, and they will be attended. Tho' the practice is Servile, yet the Clergy, I hope, 'tis not sinful, at least not more sinful, than Baptizing (without any necessity) at Home; I have done with my Remarks on the Violators of our Rubrick; and leave them now to the Censure of your Grace.

2. I shall proceed (with your Grace's leave) in the second place to consider the Violators of the Canons of our Church, as they are Clergy-Men; I beg your Grace's Pardon and Attention, whilst I run thro' the whole Body of the Canons and Constitutions of the Church; which are confirmed by Act of Parliament; I shall only (at present) make some Remarks; How many are violated by some of the Clergy.

See the Can. and  
Constitut. of K.  
James.

The first Canon commands all Ecclesiasticks from the Archbishop to the Priest, to maintain the King's Supremacy; and in the Body of the Canon is this Clause; *Furthermore, all Ecclesiastical Persons having cure of Souls, and all other Preachers, and Readers of Divinity Lectures, shall to the utmost of their Wit, Knowledge and Learning, purely and sincerely, and (without any Colour and Dissimulation) Teach, Manifest, Open, and Declare four times every year (at least) in their Sermons, and other Collations and Lectures, that all Usurped and Sovereign Power is fully taken away* — Is this Canon strictly observed by the Clergy? Do all Preachers and Lecturers comply with the Letter of it? Upon a *Melius Inquiredum*, I am afraid, your Grace will find it, almost, if not wholly laid aside. I am sure the Toleration Act does not affect it; therefore it continues in Force; and obliges the Clergy to a due Observation; and I know not, how they can Answer the Non-observance of it; I wish, I could find out a Method to excuse them.

The fourteenth Canon relates to the Form of Divine Service, which is to be used on Sundays and Holidays; and in the Body of that Canon is this Clause; *All Ministers likewise shall observe the Orders, Rites and Ceremonies prescrib'd in the Book of Common-Prayer, as well in reading the Holy Scriptures and saying of Prayers, as in Administration of the Sacraments, without either diminishing in regard of Preaching, or in any other respect; or adding in the Matter or Form thereof.* Is this Canon in all and every part strictly observed by all the Clergy? Is there no Curtailing, Mangling, or adding to the Prayers? It is worth an Enquiry.

The fifteenth Canon orders the Litany to be read by the Clergy on Wednesdays and Fridays; I would fain know, whether this Canon is strictly observed by the Parochial Clergy in the Country; I am afraid upon search 'twill be found otherwise.

The twenty seventh Canon orders, that Schismatics should not be admitted to the Communion. *No Minister, when he Celebrates the Communion, shall willingly Administer the same to those that refuse to kneel, upon*

Can. 27.



the pain of Suspension, nor to any depravers of the Common-Prayer, &c. Upon this Canon I shall presume to make two Remarks; as first, do any of the Clergy comply with the request of superstitious People, as to give the Holy Sacrament to them, sitting in their Seats? I know, that has been done formerly; I wish to hear it is not now by some of the moderate Clergy. The next Remark shall be upon a great difficulty, lying upon some of the Clergy, the case is this; suppose a notorious Schismatick, qualifying himself for a Place of profit upon that Scandalous Practice of Occasional Communion. This Person offers himself to the Minister, tho' he never designs to be there again, except it be upon the same occasion. If the Minister admits the Schismatick to Communion; he violates the Canon; if he refuses him; the Schismatick brings his Action against him to one of the Courts of *Westminster*; which may prove the actual Ruin of the Clergy-man. Now, my Lord, what's to be done in this case? I wish your Grace will oblige the World with your Sentiments on it. But were it my own case, I would observe the Canon, and leave the event to God; I should rather commit my Conscience and Family to his disposal; be the consequence what it will. If I admit him, I am liable to three years Suspension, which may be my ruin, as to my temporal Affairs; if I refuse him; I can be but undone with the violence of my Conscience, and Disobedience to the Canon and my Diocesan. But all Men think not as I do.

The 28th Canon, Orders that Strangers should not be admitted to the Communion; and in the Body of it, the Church-wardens are to take notice, whether any Strangers come often and commonly from other Parishes to their Church, and shall shew their Minister of them, lest perhaps they be admitted to the Lord's Table amongst others, which they shall forbid, and remit such come to their own Parish Churches and Ministers, there to receive the Communion with the rest of their Neighbours. Do the Churchwardens and Ministers act, as the Canon enjoins, for in the Canon both are comprehended? do they order such to return to their own Churches, there to receive? I am afraid, nay, I am sure, that some of the Clergy are in this case tardy. Right Reason is the Foundation of the Canon; and I can never enough admire the Wisdom of our Ancestors in providing so well for the welfare of the Church, as they have done in this excellent Canon. For were that minded, as it ought to be, that would prevent a further mischief, that often happens, which is, the admitting of Excommunicates and other Notorious Sinners to that sacred Ordinance. For suppose an Excommunicate, or any notorious ill Liver is repuls'd, as they ought to be from the Lord's Table, they could never be admitted elsewhere; for an Excommunicate, whilst so, is shut out of the whole Catholick Church; and was the practice of the Primitive Christians, and ought to be so, not only in our Church, but where ever the Church of Christ is dispers'd. Besides, this swarming of People strowling from their Parochial Ministers, often produces a very ill Effect, viz. a slight to their own Pastors, and an admiration for strangers, which, I think, ought to be prevented; and a due Observation of the Canon, with your Grace's Injunction, would put a stop to this unhappy practice.

The 33d Canon relates to Titles of such, as are to be made Ministers; too long to Transcribe, I shall only cull out, what are true Titles, and qualifications for Orders. A Presentation to some Living, or a true and undoubted Certificate, that a Person is provided of some Church within the said Diocese. Or a Vacancy in the Cathedral Church of that Diocese; or in some Collegiate Church therein; or Fellow of a College, or Conductor in either University, or Master of Art of five years standing, living at his own Expence in either

either University, or accept by the Bishop himself, that doth ordain him Minister——These are all the Titles and Qualifications that I find in this Canon for Holy Orders, and how strangely is it perverted! My Lord of *Sarum* his admirable Pastoral Care insists Strongly and Strenuously upon the Necessity of Certificates, and rightly observes, what vast Mischiefs such easy Certificates do bring to the Church; and it would be a great Blessing to the Church, if all Clergymen would follow his admirable Directions; we should not then have so many indigent Clergy, complaining in our Streets. The Order would be then more rever'd, and greater respect would be shew'd them; for a poor and scandalous Clergyman, I am sure, is the strangest sight in the World; And I wish, I could say, that there were none belonging to our Church. But it can't be expected, that this Grievance should be removed except greater care were taken about Recommendations to my Lords, the Bishops. They, God knows, are not to be blamed. But 'tis the easy Clergyman with his mislone Characters, that imposes upon their Lordships. *Hic ille Ileripha*——I could give many Instances of this vile Practice to your Grace, but one only at present shall suffice, and that is more than enough to show this horrid Men in a true Light. There's a certain Clergyman (whose Name I shall conceal for many Reasons) that has a Place of no more value than eight Pound *per Annum*, that has given four Titles, that I know of, to four several Persons, that have been ordain'd upon that very Title: The first Person that was Ordain'd, did not read Prayers at the place of his Title; He is now, if alive, in a strowling and Starving Condition, begs from Door to Door for a poor and scandalous Maintenance. The second could not live in *England* but went to *Virginia* to try his Fortune, and some years after return'd to his own Country; and I hear he's in a low and despicable Condition. The third Person never so much as saw the Face of an University, and yet as soon as Ordain'd set up with *Æsop's* Crow, for a mighty Preacher; But his Temporal Estate may prevent Poverty. The fourth is a Man of Parts, and I wish I could say, Prudence, and would live and scuffle in the World for his Wife and Family if his Superiours in that place would encourage him; I know him personally I am sure, that he has more Learning, than all the other three. But this is a Melancholy Theme to insist on, I shall say no more on this Head, but with Humility Supplicating your Grace for the sake of the Clergy, and their Mother the Church, to find some Method to put a stop to this vile Practice, that produces Beggars for the Sacred Order.

The forty first Canon, treats of Licenses for Pluralities of Benefices Can. 1. Limited, and Residence enjoyn'd. In the Body of it is this remarkable Clause, on which I shall Remark, provided always, that he be by a good Canon, *judicanti cautione o frudus*, bound to make his Personal Residence in each of his said Benefices for some reasonable time of the year, *per bonam anni cuiusque partem*, as 'tis in the Latin. Now the Question is, what and how long is meant by reasonable time, *bonam cuius anni partem*. That must be Answer'd by your Grace. What then shall I say of those that seldom or never make any Personal Residence; of those that have no License from their Diocesans. There's no doubt to be made, but that such Pastors, or rather Wolves, have a heavy account to give to God and their Flocks for that scandalous Practice of Non-Residence. That case your Grace knows, and what all Effect Non-Residence has upon the Church; but I shall say no more at present; it being largely treated on in two Pamphlets, viz. † *The Case of Non-Residence*; and *The Reasonableness of bringing in a Bill, to oblige the Clergy to Residence*, which I presume your Grace has seen; and which

† See the Case of Non-Residence and Reasonableness, &c.



ever been Answered nor never will. In a little time Bishop *Carlton's* thoughts on Non-Residence will see the Light, being a Supplement to the Case of Non-Residence, to which other Testimonies against that scandalous Practice will be added.

The fifty fifth Canon contains the Form of Prayer to be used by Preachers before their Sermons; I am afraid some of the Clergy Transgress this Canon; the Words, as briefly as they conveniently may, I am sure, exclude long-winded, incoherent stuff, too much affected by some Preachers. 'Tis certain, that our publick Form of Worship is very extensive, and comprehends all Cases; and I find no occasion for a long Harangue before Sermons. I am confident, that those that use them, design a Slur upon the publick Form, and bring a Contempt upon it. Some Lecturers, can't be excused; for they spend their time, I know not how, in the Vestries, during the time of Divine Service; and then they mount the Pulpit with their Amusements. 'Twould be a vast Advantage to our Church; if a strict, and unvariable Form was prescrib'd for all Preachers. A Mulct proposed to be inflicted on the Violators. It would prevent gadding and stragling from their own Pastors; it would promote Unanimity amongst Christians, Peace, and Concord between Pastor and People; a Blessing, I am afraid too great to be expected in this Debauch'd and Atheistical Age. A Convocation, if encouraged by your Grace, might procure such a Blessing, which God grant.

Preachers and Lecturers by the 56th. Canon are obliged to read Divine Service twice a year, which if not done, to be Suspended. That it is not done is aagrant Truth, and your Grace, I suppose, is not insensible of it. The Desk Plate is by some had in so great Contempt, that a Scarfe by no manner of means look well in it. But these Gentleman ought to consider, that the Duty of offering the Sacrifice of Prayers and Praise is of more weight and value than preaching; but I shall meet with those mighty Don's in another Place, when I come to treat about mixt Cases: I shall therefore proceed to some fresh matter.

The fifty sixth Canon obliges the Clergy to Catechise every Sunday and Holy-day, and in the body of it they are censur'd for that Omision; *If any Minister neglect his Duty therein, let him be sharply reprov'd upon the first Complaint*—

*after the submitting himself to the Bishop, we shall willingly Offend herein, let him be Suspended. If so the third time—then Excommunicate, and so remain,*

*until he be Reformed.* This Pious Canon, I believe, was strictly observed, till those unhappy Civil Wars of Forty One, which caused the Sequestration of your Grace's Father, and the Murder of an Innocent King, with the Ruine of the Church and State. Then Canting and Hypocrisy kick'd out Catechising, which could never be restored; People love to have their Ears tickled, though their Understandings are not Edified, which Catechising would do. † All sorts of People are prodigiouly Ignorant in the Fundamentals of the Christian Religion, and Catechising would retrieve that Ignorance to the Glory of the Church, and the great Edification of the Souls of Multitudes.

† See the Decay of Christian Piety, 402, 403.

The sixty second Canon relates to the times of Marriage, which Can. 62. must be Solemniz'd betwixt the Hours of eight and twelve in the morning, and in time of Divine Service, *Tempore precum publicarum*, as the Latin Canon has it; and I would feign know the Sense and Reason of that Expression; I am told by a Learned \* Man, a Sufferer with your Grace's Father, that Morning Prayer on Sundays and Holy-days began at Eight in the Morning; when ended, Marriages were Solemniz'd in the face of the Congregation; Doubts and Cases of Conscience were

\* Heylin Hist. of the Reformation.

were then Answer'd by the Clergy, &c. At ten the Communion Service began, then followed the Sermon, and the Celebration of the Lord's Supper. I take to be the meaning of *Tempore precum publicarum*; if it is not, I earnestly desire a better Account from your Grace, or any other Learned Man. The fringers of this Canon are to be suspended *per triennium*, as is apparent from the beginning of the Canon. No Minister upon Pain of Suspension *per triennium* *facto*, &c. The Violators of this Canon have done an incredible deal of mischief; for how many have lost their Children to the utter undoing of them, which shews the necessity of obliging the Clergy to a strict Observance of it. But I have spoke of the Case of Marriage before, and I need not repeat.

Can. 69. The 69th Canon relates to Ministers Baptizing Children in case of Danger; and if the Minister refuse to go upon a real Account, he's to be Suspended for three Months. This is so charitable an Office, as a Man would think, that a Heart of Stone only would refuse it. Yet some won't move, except they be paid for the Journey. Our Catechism tells us, that *we are by Nature born in Sin and the Children of Wrath*; and shall some of the Clergy by their Supineness and Covetousness, be the occasion that they should not by Baptism be made the *Children of Grace*? This ought not to be done. 'Tis a false Cruelty to the Souls of those poor Infants; for Baptism makes them *Members of Christ, Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*. Here I stop, and shall not at present proceed any further in the Canons. I shall only mention one or two mixt Cases, which would not properly fall in with the Rubrick and Canons, and so put an end to this Discourse.

First then, that Lecturers in the modern Sense of the Word are oblig'd upon a Penalty to read Divine Service once a Month. Our Church and State, by God's Blessing being recovered out of the confusion of the late times of Usurpation, which was mainly promoted and carried on by canting, Hypocritical, and sniveling Lecturers; our Senate, in the 14th of K. Charles II. of glorious Memory, took this Case into consideration, and wisely provided for the Welfare of Church and State, by the prudent Act of Uniformity; and, I dare say, were it put into strict Execution it would exclude that Generation of Vipers, whose Fathers eat out the Bowels of their Mothers from the Church. The Lord Clarendon, in his immortal History of the Civil Wars, wisely observes that the St. Antoline's Lecturers were the first Trumpeters that sounded from the Pulpit Rebellion against their Sovereign K. Charles the Martyr. And for the future, to prevent if possible, Rebellion in the State, and Schism in the Church, the Act of Uniformity, that sticks so much in the Stomachs of Schismatics, was composed. That which relates to Lecturers, follows in these Words: And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that

Act of Uniformity. no Person shall be received as a Lecturer, or permitted, suffered or allowed to preach as a Lecturer in any Church, Chappel, or other Place of publick Worship within the Realm of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Berwick upon Tweed, unless he be first approved, and thereunto Licensed by the Archbishop of the Province, or Bishop of the Diocese, or (in case the See be vacant) by the Guardian of the Spiritualities under his Seal; and shall in the Presence of the Archbishop, or Bishop, or Guardian, read the nine and thirty Articles of Religion, mentioned in the Statute of the thirteenth of the late Queen Elizabeth, which Declaration of his unfeigned Assent to the same; and that every Person and Persons, who now is, or hereafter shall be Licensed, Appointed, or Received as Lecturer, to Preach upon any day of the Week in any Church or Chappel, place of Publick Worship within this Realm of England, at the places aforesaid, the first time he Preacheth (before his Sermon) shall Openly, Publickly, and Solemnly read the Common-Prayers and Service in and by the said Book appointed to be read for that time of the Day, and then and there publickly and openly declare his Assent unto and Approbation of the said Book, and to the use of all the Prayers, Rites and Ceremonies, Forms and Orders therein contained and prescribed according to the Form before appointed in this Act; and also shall upon the first Lecture-day of every Month afterwards, so long as he continues Lecturer and Preacher there, at the place appointed for his said Lecture or Sermon, before the said Lecture or Sermon, openly, publickly and solemnly read the Common-Prayers in and by the said Book appointed to be Read for that time of the Day, at which the said Lecture or Sermon is



ached ; And after such Reading thereof, shall openly and publicly before the Congregation there Assembled, Declare his unfeigned Assent, and Consent unto, and Approbation of the Book, and to the use of all the Prayers, Rites and Ceremonies, Forms and Orders therein contained and prescribed, according to the Form aforesaid ; And that all and every such Person or Persons, who shall neglect or refuse to do the same, shall from thenceforth be disabled to Preach, or any Lecture or Sermon in the said or any other Church. — I do not hear as God grant I never may, That that Clause is repealed, yet I am confident, that 'tis openly and knowingly omitted to be put in Practice ; 'tis a vast affront to Authority, and a Contempt to the Church and its pious Offices : In short, this general neglect of Lecturing on this Point makes the World believe, that they despise their Superiors, and their Censures the very Authority of the Church and Queen.

Secondly, and lastly, The next thing that I shall speak of, is the full Method of Pulpit Commendations ; 'Tis not known, what a religious deal of Mischief, such Characters do to common Christianity ; it would make ones Hair stand an-end, to hear a Common Quaker commended for his Virtues, and Women guilty of Adultery, praised for their Chastity, and Men that deny the common Articles of Christianity, applauded for Christianity ; 'twas my hap once to hear a piece of Sermon, Preached at the Funeral of an overthrown rich Com-mercer ; and to my Amazement the Preacher was placing him in Paragon without the necessity of believing several Articles of Faith ; in my self, as well as others were afraid, that all the Articles were hanging at once, and that dry Morality alone was security enough to a Man in Bliss and Happiness. *Auri sacra Fames* has a mighty influence on some Preachers, and a present Recompence prevails more, than the Recompence of Reward in the other World. Another Person I heard extolling one to the Skies for a Virtuous, good Wife, of whom 'twas credibly reported, that she was not Married, but had spent several Years in the Sin of Adultery.

The whole Town has rung of that infamous Sermon of that Scandalous Doctor, that was Preach'd at the Funeral of the late D--- of D--- whose Character and Life is too well known to be insisted on ; and *Dun-* his Book ; viz. *Hazard of a Death-Bed Repentance*, has reckon'd with that Doctor ; I wish, it had been done by an abler and more judicious Hand, I have not time to enlarge, but shall only give some Manly strokes of an Honest Gentleman in his excellent Sermon at Oxford. He is treating of the Mischief of such fullsome Pulpit Characters in these words ; † But as the Difference of Persons may alter Degrees of Guilt ; some according to the Stations, in which they are plac'd, are more unpardonable in putting Good and Evil, and Evil for Good, than others : And those in whom it should be most intolerable, are Persons of a Sacred Character. If they, whose Judgment and Authority are and ought to be, of much Weight, whose proper business it is to interpret the Scriptures, truly represent the Mind of God ; if they out of Fear, or Hope, or sinister Design, should deliver that for Virtue, which they know and feel to be Vice ; or any way Prevaricate, and handle the word of God falsely ; of how sore a Punishment would these be thought Worthy, who mis-lead the Souls committed to their Charge, Prostitute their

† Trap before the Judges.

High

*High and Holy Office to such vile purposes, and bring a Reproach that Profession, which they ought to Adorn. Our Blessed Lord assures that whosoever shall break the least of his Commandments and teach Men shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. Should any then of Sacred Order make Panegyrics upon the worst of Men, only because they are great Men; smooth over some of their Vices, and praise them for others. Flatter the Dead, to make their Court to the Living, and all at the expence of their Integrity, by venting false Doctrine, as well as false Obedience, in order to advance their Fortunes, and serve their wretched Interest in this World. What a Mass of Guilt would they heap upon themselves if they would imitate the Example of Judas in betraying their Lord's Person for Money, as the other Traitor did his Person; and without the severest and timely Repentance, would by the worst sort of Simony pay out their Souls for the Purchase of their Preferments.*

I shall present your Grace with one Instance more of fulsome Praise and Commendation, and then I have done. One of our Grace's Predecessors, Arch-Bishop T-----n in a Sermon before the King: He has extolled the French King to the Skies for his Art of War and not, at last applies this Scripture, *Behold a greater than he is here, King William*: For which among other things, he, I mean the Arch-Bishop, was Sainted by the Holbourn Doctor in his Prayer before the Sons of the Clergy in Cheapside. I shall now Conclude all with hearty Prayers for the Clergy of our Church, in the Words of the incomparable Letany. 'That it would please God to Illumine ( your Grace and ) all Bishops, Priests and Deacons, with Knowledge and Understanding of his Word, and that both by Preaching and Living, they may set it forth, and shew it according

*And Grant this, O Lord, for the Honour of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, be ascribed all Power, Might, Majesty and Dominion, World without End. Amen.*

LAUS DEO SOLI.



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